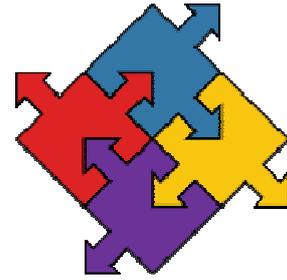


September 2012

# The Net

The Magazine of Priestfield Parish Church, Edinburgh  
*Living in the Way of Jesus*



Web: <http://priestfield.org.uk>

Minister: Rev Dr Jared W Hay



## Jared's Napkin Scribbles

### ***J'ai poussé la porte – a vision for our building***

Elsewhere in The Net you will find an article by Barry Cross which will bring you up to date with the schedule for our building repair and refurbishment. Here, I want to share with you a photo and poem from France that can help inspire our vision for the use of the church in the coming days.



There are very few French churches we have visited where we find that the doors are locked. As we entered Saint-Sauveur in Dinan I looked back and saw the light coming through the open door and it seemed to invite me to take a photo (a much more professional version of which we later found at an artists' workshop and which you can see on the Internet at [http://aimssi.free.fr/g\\_lieux.html](http://aimssi.free.fr/g_lieux.html) ). What sprang to mind was a poem given to me some years ago by a lady in Balerno who had found it on her travels and, in passing it on, said, 'This is what we are seeking to do.' And I believe it is also what we at Priestfield are seeking to do.

### **J'ai poussé la porte**

Je n'ai rien à Te dire  
Mais passant par la  
J'ai poussé la porte,  
Pour voir... par curiosité...  
Pour prier aussi peut-être

Comme il fait bon dans ce silence  
Et je me laisse envahir par lui.  
Comme il fait bon dans ta  
maison.

Je n'ai rien à Te dire,  
Mais cet autel m'attire  
Et ces chaises et ces bancs vides  
Me parlent des hommes absents.  
Qui viennent y prier  
A d'autres heures  
Parce que, pour eux,  
Tu es le Dieu vivant.  
Mais oui, bien sûr,  
Cette église vit de Toi.

Tu es l'Éternel, le Saint,  
Le Créateur, l'Immense,  
Celui qui est,  
Celui qui était,  
Celui qui vient.

J'ai poussé la porte  
En cette antique église  
Ou tout parle de Toi.  
J'y fais une pause,  
J'y trouve la paix.  
Mais il me faut repartir  
Et je voudrais rester encore.

### **I opened the door**

I have nothing to say to You,  
But as I was passing by  
I opened the door,  
Just to look...out of curiosity...  
Perhaps also to pray.

How good it feels in this silence,  
And I let myself be overwhelmed  
by You,  
How good it feels in Your house.

I have nothing to say to You,  
But this altar attracts me  
And these empty chairs and pews  
Speak to me of absent people,  
Who come here to pray,  
At other times,  
Because for them,  
You are the living God.  
But yes, of course,  
This church lives through You.

You are the Eternal, the Holy One,  
The Creator, the Immense One,  
The One who is,  
Who was,  
Who will be.

I opened the door  
Into this ancient church  
Where everything speaks of You.  
I pause here,  
I find peace here.  
But I have to be on my way again  
And I would like to stay a bit  
longer.

Je n'avais rien à te dire  
Et je me surprends à Te parler.  
J'emporte avec moi,  
Et pas seulement pour moi,  
Ton silence et ta paix,  
Ton humble présence en ce lieu,  
Dieu fort, Dieu Grand,  
Dieu Immortel.

Tu m'as accueilli  
Je t'ai rencontré.  
Je le dirai à mes frères.  
S'ils pouvaient un jour aussi  
Rencontrer Ta présence.  
*Anon.*

I had nothing to say to you  
And I surprise myself that I am  
speaking to you.  
I take with me,  
And not just for myself,  
Your silence and your peace  
Your humble presence in this place:  
Strong God, great God,  
Immortal God.

You welcomed me.  
I have met you.  
I will tell my friends  
So that one day, too,  
They can experience Your presence.

*Translation: © Willis Field and Jared Hay*

### ***Celebrations galore***

In the last few weeks there have been wedding anniversary celebrations in several church families, with a number still to come. Norman and June Henderson and Barry and Diane Cross marked their Ruby Wedding, while Ian and Chris Williams received a card from the Queen to congratulate them on their Diamond Wedding. However, in Olympic-speak the gold medallists are Jim and Eva Black who, almost unbelievably, are about to mark an incredible seventy years of married life. Beside all of these couples, Jane and I feel youthful trainees as we look forward to our Silver Wedding later in the year.

To all mentioned above, and to any of whom we have not heard, many congratulations and may God's blessing continue with you.

### ***And finally...***

I received a Thank You card for the whole church from Ian, Alexandra, Joshua and Andrew Power for all the love and support that they have had over the course of the last few months. It has been a very trying experience for them and Ian's recovery will take time, but it's also had some very positive and unexpected outcomes. They hope to be back in church as a family before long, and it will be good to have Ian back among us. I would ask you just to welcome him back without asking too many questions – having to tell the story often would be a trial. But I know that

they will all appreciate your continued love and prayers for them.

Blessings,

Jared.

## WHAT'S ON? WHAT'S ON? WHAT'S ON?

### SEPTEMBER 2012

Sunday	2	1030	All-age Communion Service incorporating <i>GodSpace</i>
Tuesday	4	1930	Kirk Session
Sunday	9	1030	All-age Service incorporating <i>GodSpace</i>
Thursday	13	1930	Praise and Prayer
Sunday	16	1030	All-age Service incorporating <i>GodSpace</i>
Sunday	23	1030	All-age Service incorporating <i>GodSpace</i>
Thursday	27	1930	Praise and Prayer
Saturday	29	1600 - 1800	Harvest 'Messy Church'
Sunday	30	1030	All-age Harvest Celebration incorporating <i>GodSpace</i>



### OCTOBER

Saturday	6	1000	Coffee Morning
Sunday	7	1030	All-age Communion Service incorporating <i>GodSpace</i>
Tuesday	9	1930	The Guild
Wednesday	10	1930	Kirk Session
Thursday	11	1930	Praise and Prayer
Sunday	14	1030	All-age Service incorporating <i>GodSpace</i>
Sunday	21	1030	All-age Service incorporating <i>GodSpace</i>

Tuesday	23	1930	The Guild
Thursday	25	1930	Praise and Prayer
Sunday	28	1030	All-age Service incorporating <i>GodSpace</i>

## NOVEMBER

Saturday	3	1000	Coffee Morning
Sunday	4	1030	All-age Communion Service incorporating <i>GodSpace</i>
Tuesday	6	1930	The Guild
Thursday	8	1930	Praise and Prayer
Sunday	11	1000 1045	Remembrance Service at church Community Remembrance Service at the War Memorial, Prestonfield Avenue
Sunday	18	1030	All-age Service incorporating <i>GodSpace</i>
Tuesday	20	1930	The Guild
Thursday	22	1930	Praise and Prayer
Sunday	25	1030	All-age Service incorporating <i>GodSpace</i>
Tuesday	27	1930	Kirk Session

## DECEMBER

Saturday	1	1000 1600 - 1800	Coffee Morning Advent 'Messy Church'
Sunday	2	1030	All-age Advent Sunday Communion Service incorporating <i>GodSpace</i> <i>including the bringing of gifts which will be donated to the Prison Chaplaincy for distribution to the children of prisoners at Christmas.</i>



**WHAT'S ON? WHAT'S ON? WHAT'S ON?**

## **DRY-ROT AND LOUNGE REMODELLING WORKS - LATEST NEWS**

At a meeting on 10 June 2012 the congregation approved progressing with the dry-rot eradication work and the remodelling of the Lounge/vestibule/kitchen, subject to final approval by the congregation of funding arrangements.

In the days after this important decision, we heard (21 June) that we had been 'pencilled-in' for a substantial grant of over £40,000 from Historic Scotland/Heritage Lottery Fund. This was followed only days later (28 June) by the news that we had been awarded a grant of £35,000 by the Church of Scotland General Trustees.

The proposed works were also supported by Presbytery at its meeting on 26 June, subject to it approving a final business plan.

Over the following weeks the funding arrangements were considered by the Kirk Session's Finance Group and a paper was produced setting out the way forward. This paper was circulated to members of the Kirk Session and congregation and is reproduced elsewhere in this edition of 'The Net'.

Following the approval of these funding arrangements by the Kirk Session (on 22 July 2012) and the Congregation (on 29 July 2012) they were submitted to Edinburgh Presbytery. Its final approval is now awaited.

We have also made application to the Presbytery of Edinburgh's Fabric Loan Fund for grant support of £3,000 to purchase equipment (fridge, oven, hob, dishwasher, etc) for the new kitchen. We have been successful in recent years with applications to this fund so it may be that other congregations' needs take precedence this year. We'll wait and see!

In parallel with this work on financing, progress is being made with the practical elements of the work. David Willis, our architect, has completed the design and applied for building warrant approval from the Council. Tender documents are being prepared and once these are complete they must be submitted to Historic Scotland/Heritage Lottery Fund for approval. This step can take from 6 - 8 weeks. Once approvals are received, contractors will be asked to price the work and a contract can be awarded.

We'll need to wait a little longer before we'll be in a position to firm up on a timetable but it looks as if we may be able to start work shortly after the Christmas/New Year break. This would allow us to have the busy Advent and Christmas season in Church before decanting upstairs to the hall.

Do continue to pray for us as a congregation, and for those with special responsibility for the works and finance... and praise God for his many blessings.

*Barry Cross*

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## **Dry Rot and Alterations Contracts - Financial Position**

Balance of funds from main stonework contract		<b>£2,866</b>
Funds raised for Redecoration and Dry Rot works		
Gift Day 2010	£20,149	
Gift Day 2011	21,579	
Grant - General Trustees	10,000	
Grant - Edinburgh Presbytery	<u>7,500</u>	
	£59,228	
Redecoration costs	<u>48,834</u>	<b>10,394</b>
Fund balance at 31 December 2011		<b>£13,260</b>
Deduct: payments in 2012		<u>2,000</u>
		<b>11,260</b>
Potential Grants available for Dry Rot repairs and Lounge alterations (including work on Towers)		
Historic Scotland/HLF	£42,600	
General Trustees - Dry Rot	5,000	
General Trustees - Alterations	<u>35,000</u>	<b>82,600</b>
Potential amount available		<b>93,860</b>
<b>ESTIMATED COSTS</b>		
Dry Rot	£30,000	
Lounge alterations and Towers	<u>88,000</u>	<b>118,000</b>
<b>SHORTFALL</b>		<b><u>£24,140</u></b>

Edinburgh Presbytery reduced our 2011 payment to Ministries and Mission by £9,000 to assist our cash position in relation to the Dry Rot.

While this features in our accounts as reducing our deficit, as a result we were able to allocate the agreed 90% of the Gift Day income to this fund.

In 2012, we would hope that our Gift Day would raise some £9,000 (after wiping out any budget deficit). We would, therefore, need to obtain a loan from the General Trustees of around £20,000 to enable us to go ahead now with the full project knowing we have enough money to pay for it. This loan would be repayable over five years.

Our existing loans are £9,000 due to the General Trustees (repayable in instalments over the next 4 and a half years) and £12,000 due to members over the next 5 years.

We would ask members to commit to annual gifts over the next 5 years to clear the total amount due.

No account has been taken of any VAT which may be recoverable under the Listed Places of Worship Scheme or under zero Rating.

The Finance Group and the Refurbishment Group recommends to the Kirk Session that we put a motion to the Congregation seeking approval for the following financial arrangements that would enable us to proceed with submission of a business plan to the Presbytery in August, with a view to:

- 1) obtaining permission to proceed with the work
- 2) making application to the General Trustees for a grant/loan to cover the shortfall
- 3) proceeding with the dry rot work and the lounge refurbishment as soon as possible after 1 October 2012 to minimise VAT exposure.

Financial arrangements:

- 1) Acceptance of the grants from HS/HLF and the General Trustees
- 2) Application through the Presbytery to the General Trustees for Grant/Loan to cover the shortfall (approx £20k)
- 3) Hold a Gift Day in October 2012 and each year until the loans are paid off (minimum of £9k + any budget shortfall)
- 4) Continue to seek contributions from individuals and trusts

## ~ TREASURERS' REPORT ~

Offerings for the first half of the year are encouraging, amounting to £27,370 compared with £24,726 for the same period in 2011. We are grateful to all who have prayerfully considered their giving and we would continue to encourage everyone to continue to do so following the Stewardship Campaign in May.

Income for use of the premises totalled £2,200 and we were grateful to receive a £500 legacy from the late Miss Christina Berry.

Expenditure is around £1,000 under the budget, but with the budget predicting a deficit, it is the intention of the Kirk Session to hold a Gift Day later in the year, with some of the proceeds going to the general fund as well as to refurbishment.

*Fiona Ferguson and Andrew Steven  
Joint Treasurers*

---ooOoo---

*Prayer and Meditation ~*

**Maximise This Day**



**“THIS IS THE DAY THE LORD HAS MADE.”**

*Psalm 118:24*

**God determines the number of your days, but you determine how they are spent.**

The Psalmist said,

**'This is the day the Lord has made;  
we will rejoice and be glad in it.'**

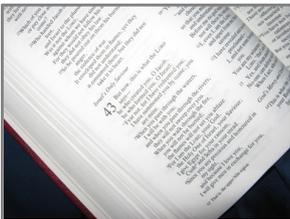
Yesterday is a cancelled cheque, tomorrow is a promissory note, today is all you've got. And you can begin your life over today, if you live by these words: 'Today I will delete from my diary two days-yesterday and tomorrow. Yesterday was for learning; tomorrow will be a consequence of what I do today.'

Today I will face life with the conviction that this day will never return, that it may be the last opportunity I'll have to contribute because there's no guarantee I'll see tomorrow. Today I will be courageous enough not to let opportunity pass me by; my only alternative will be to succeed. Today I will invest my most valuable resource, my time, into my most important possession, the life God has given me. I'll spend each minute purposefully, making today a unique opportunity. I'll tackle each obstacle knowing that with God's help I can overcome it. Today I will resist doubt and pessimism and warm my world with a smile. I'll maintain a strong faith, expect nothing but the best, take time to be happy, see every task as an opportunity to honour the Lord, and endeavour to leave His footprints on the hearts of those I meet.'

John Boykin wrote,

**'Time is your life—nothing more, nothing less. The way you spend your hours and your days, is the way you spend your life.' So pray, 'Lord, help me to maximise this day.'**

---ooOoo---



## Reading the Bible – for me?

Reading the Bible ~

- is not easy?
- is hard work?
- is boring?
- is hard to understand?
- is out of date?
- is one way of hearing God speak?
- is fun?
- is essential?
- is relevant today?
- is a waste of time?
- guides us?
- is confusing?

**What do you think?**

At Priestfield we have signed up to our Shared Patterns of Commitment. As part of this, we have agreed to read and reflect on the Bible regularly, that we may find our place in the Story of which we are part, and continue to live out that Story.

### **How can we do this?**

First of all, it can be hard to know which Bible to read.

There are a number of versions nowadays. In church we use one called the New International Version or NIV.

But there are others. The Faith Mission has a variety to look at.

### **What can help?**

Some find that daily notes can help. There are a quite a lot to choose from. At Church we usually have three different booklets from Scripture Union - **Closer to God**, **Daily Bread** and **Encounter with God**.

There are others which have different approaches.

You do not have to follow something like this, but it can help.

There are large print versions available.

If you like to use your computer, phone or iPad to access help, there are Apps for this. Scripture Union again has one that can be accessed at [www.wordlive.org](http://www.wordlive.org)

Everyone is different - you may want to read a little on your own or with a friend or with a group, with some notes or not. However, whatever you do reading the Bible will help deepen your relationship with God.

Please ask me if you would like to have any notes or have a chat about any of this.

No one is an expert, but we can all help one another.

*Diane Cross*

---oooOOooo---

**‘Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.’**

*Psalm 119:105*

# Are you using your gifts?

During the month of May, we looked at Stewardship, which includes not only our giving in the monetary sense, but also giving of our time and using our talents. We can use our talents and give our time by becoming involved in many ways, eg joining the Welcome Teams, helping with the sound desk and the projection equipment (training would be given), doing the readings during the service, making and serving coffee after the service. Other areas where you might like to help are putting flowers in church, and distributing them after the service. **These are only some of the areas where help is much needed.**

So, if you have a welcoming smile and like meeting people, if you are technically minded, would enjoy singing in the choir, play a musical instrument, enjoy reading the Scriptures, like the social get-together after the service, do let us know. We will put you in touch with the person who makes up the rotas, who will give more information about what is involved.

[eleanor.forbes60@btinternet.com](mailto:eleanor.forbes60@btinternet.com)



## Science, Reason and Religion

- Can science and religion ever be compatible bed-fellows?
- Is belief in a God contrary to common sense?
- Are some people simply genetically 'born for religion'?

In an exciting programme of talks, dialogue and discussion at Mayfield Salisbury Church, an impressive list of eminent speakers from the fields of science, psychiatry, theology and philosophy will be discussing their views on these questions, and others, in an exploration of what it means to be truly human.

The *Festival of Science, Reason and Religion* will run from 19 September to 7 October, with events each Wednesday and Sunday evening at 7pm. All events are open to the public and are free.

Talks will last for an hour, and will be followed by Question and Answer sessions. After each event, there will also be an opportunity to mingle and meet the speakers over some refreshment.

An invitation is extended to everyone to attend the keynote address of the *Science, Reason and Religion Festival*, to be delivered by Professor Keith Ward, philosopher, theologian and author, on 19 September at 7pm in Mayfield Salisbury Church.

Please note that, although all events are free, they are ticketed. To find out more about the programme of events or to confirm your place for the opening and/or subsequent talks, please log on to [www.mayfieldsalisbury.org](http://www.mayfieldsalisbury.org) or call Mayfield Salisbury Church on: (0131) 667-1522.

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## THE GUILD

The Guild begins session 2012-2013 on Tuesday 9 October, covering the Theme and Discussion Topic. Our first speaker, on 23 October, will be from Scottish Love in Action - a charity Caring for Children in India. On 6 November, Mike Brown, a native of Portobello and a retired civil engineer, will be talking about BUCHAN Portobello Decorative Pottery, concentrating on the era of decorative ware production in Portobello which closed in 1972 with production moving to Crieff. If anyone owns an item of BUCHAN pottery, he would be happy for them to bring it along for an opinion and dating. On 20 November our next speaker will be Alison Frazer from the Council for Music in Hospitals. December 4 we have Madeleine Thomas on Spiti in the Remote Himalayas. Our last evening this year, 11 December, will be spent at the King's Theatre enjoying the pantomime.

The Guild is open to all, both men and women, of any age, and we would welcome new members.

Shirley Kirk

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# STUDENTS @ PRIESTFIELD

## FRESHERS IN SEPTEMBER

During September we hope to be welcoming new students to Priestfield as a result of our activities during Freshers' Week and the Church Search. We have designed attractive new flyers and there is a stock of them in the Lounge for you to pop through the letterbox of any students living near you.

## BRING AND SHARE LUNCHES

Lunch after the morning service continues to be the principal focus for the student group. As a welcoming gesture, the menu will be provided by various members of the congregation during September. As well as eating, there will be time for a varied programme of discussions, DVD viewing, etc., along with planning for the popular student cooking nights and other events.

## Prayer Points:

1. Pray that we give a friendly welcome to students who come to Priestfield.
2. Pray for Freshers, as many will be living away from home for the first time.
3. Pray for international students as they arrive, many with families, and adapt to a different lifestyle and culture.
4. Pray for Christian students that they can continue to follow Jesus in a new environment.
5. Pray that all returning students, wherever they come from, will hear the Good News and that we will be part of spreading it.
6. Pray for all those involved with students in Priestfield.

*June Henderson*

---oooOOOooo---

**‘Show me your ways, O LORD, teach me your paths.’**

*Psalm 25:4*

## *Prayer and Meditation ~*



### ***The Right Word at the Right Time***

**“WHAT YOU SAY CAN MEAN LIFE OR DEATH”**

*Proverbs 16:21 NCV*

To honour her students, a teacher gave each a ribbon that stated, ‘Who I am makes a difference,’ and asked them to pass it along to someone who’d made a difference in their lives.

One kid gave his to a young executive who helped him plan his career. He in turn gave it to his boss, who was hard to get along with. He told him how much he’d been influenced by his creativity, and asked him to give it to somebody he admired. That night the boss told his fourteen-year-old son, ‘I’ve thought about who I want to honour—and it’s you. My days are hectic, and I’m always complaining about your grades and your messy bedroom. Tonight I want to let you know the difference you’ve made in my life. Besides your mother, you’re the most important person I know, and I love you.’

Fighting back tears, the boy replied, ‘Earlier today I wrote a letter explaining why I’d taken my life, and asking you to forgive me. I was going to do it when everybody was asleep. I didn’t think you’d care. I guess I won’t need the letter now.’ Upstairs in his son’s room the father found the anguish-filled note beside a loaded gun.

God can help you to ‘...speak a word in season to him who is weary...’ (*Isaiah 50:4 NKJV*). Words change lives: ‘What you say can mean life or death.’

**sSo, go out of your way today to speak words of encouragement to somebody you don’t normally think about. ‘...a word spoken at the right moment—how good it is!’ (*Proverbs 15:23 AMP*).**

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*These daily devotional excerpts are taken from The Word for Today  
and are used by permission from*

*United Christian Broadcasters Ltd, P.O. Box 255, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 8YY.  
Free issues of the daily devotional are available.*



## *Dance of the Trinity*

During a trip to Fountains Abbey in Yorkshire, the theologian Lesslie Newbigin was amused to read the following section in his guide book: 'Here in the Chapter House the monks gathered every Sunday to hear a sermon from the Abbot except on Trinity Sunday, owing to the difficulty of the subject.'

Throughout history, the doctrine of the Trinity has often been perceived as a metaphysical assault course, reserved for students of theology as a means solely of testing mental stamina. The Trinity is a belief that even Abbots, full time church 'professionals,' would rather not attempt to explain to others. Ideas of God being one and yet simultaneously three leaves most, if not all, with a headache. The analogous images of three leafed clovers and ice-water-steam are often our only means of understanding the complexity of the Trinity. In brief, there is no simple way of explaining the Trinity. For this reason the Trinity has often been held as an abstract doctrine with little, if any, impact on our daily lives and worship. Analogies, while useful, often convey a sense of the impersonal.

The writer of the first epistle of John certainly does not envisage God as being impersonal when he proclaims that 'God is Love' (1 John 4:8). This proclamation captures a vision of God as, not just one who has the ability to be loving, but as one who is by their very nature love itself. Love is not an addition to God's character but is an integral part of God's identity. God is love because God first loves in God's self. This is the Trinity. In the eternal and mutual love which each person of the Trinity shares for the others, we come to comprehend the basis of God as love.

It is this complete, binding, mutual love which some theologians have attempted to capture in the metaphor of a dance. Rather than a lifeless doctrinal statement, the vision of a dance, with its interweaving ecstatic movements, capture the energy and life of the divine love. This dance allows us to experience the Trinity as love, rather than solely be understood academically. This vision of the Trinity as an eternal and inter-relational love leads to the revelation that creation itself is founded on love. It is this love that humanity, as part of creation, is called to participate in with our actions towards others and the created order. Humanity was, in a sense, created to partake in the divine dance. It is into this dance of life

and love modelled in the Trinity that the Christian community is again called to; for to be 'In Christ' is to 'become participants of the divine nature' (2 Pet 1.4). God invites you, will you dance?

*Ross Jesmont  
New College Student*

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## ***GREETINGS FROM THE USA!***



*Ian and Isabel Murray are currently visiting family and friends in North America*

Hinsdale, IL, USA

27th August 2012

Dear All,

After a lot of travel and many activities we are now with Malcolm having a quieter time. The two grandchildren here started school last week and their winter activities are about to begin.

Thank you for your prayers for us. We were very conscious of God's hand upon us many times. Probably the most notable was when we had a bad puncture on the hired car's back wheel as we were going along the interstate just over the border from South into North Carolina. Ian changed the wheel while great big trucks were thundering past and then we had to

get to somewhere to get a new tyre as these 'doughnut' spares are only allowed to be used for a few miles.

Our grandson's wedding was lovely. The 7 p.m. start made sense when we encountered how very hot the temperatures are. The ceremony took place outside the court house in Lancaster, South Carolina on a beautiful evening.

As we did not get to a worship service the next morning due to folks leaving at different times, in the evening we went looking for a church as we were staying an extra night at the hotel. At the first two to which we were directed there was no activity, then we noticed cars parked outside the third. The church door was closed but we could see people inside the halls as we walked by. A man came out and welcomed us in. This was the first of their winter programme, starting with a special supper evening to welcome a missionary couple who were to speak about their work. Guess from where?? From Pakistan!!!! We did not know them as they had just gone after we had left but we knew the place, the people with whom they work etc. Was that not a God-incidence rather than a coincidence?! We certainly felt it was the icing on the cake for us at the end of a lovely weekend.

That was one Sunday. Here we worship with the family at a contemporary service at the Covenant Church but yesterday Ian and I got up early and went to the 9 a.m. service, which is a traditional one - at which we were more comfortable.

In Arizona we worshipped with the Mennonites, where our godson's parents worship and where they assign carers to look after Moses during the service. Moses is still doing quite well and his life expectancy is now predicted to be longer than previously anticipated. He is much less aggressive than two years ago.

When in North Carolina, we worshipped in a vast auditorium - the Summit Church, Raleigh. People were on duty to direct traffic such were the numbers of people and cars. The preaching of God's Word was excellent as were their outreach programmes, both overseas and to the community. The music was quite a big change! We travelled over an hour to this service as we had been invited by our hostess to accompany her to her church on the Sunday (we did not realize that her church was not just round the corner!).

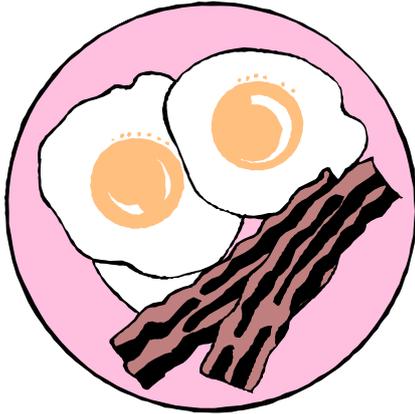
This note is now too long so we will stop but assure you of our love and prayers as things get underway again at Priestfield after the summer.

With our love,

*Ian & Isabel*

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## BACON AND EGGS



*Our Mission Partner, **Rev George Shand**, Minister at St Andrew's Scots Memorial Church in Jerusalem, writes an online blog. Here we share an excerpt from a recent post, You can read this and other blogs at <http://georghand.wordpress.com>*

August 22, 2012

I was in the Bank, in the middle of a transaction, when the power failed. At first I thought it might have been a general power cut. These had been threatened during the recent hot spell when everybody had their air conditioners on full and the power company was concerned they could not meet demand. But the power cut was local to the Bank and the teller thought the problem would be solved quickly. "If you have time to wait," he said, "just go round the corner for a coffee and then come back."

The closest cafe around the corner was on the road to Yafo (Jaffa Street) the main shopping centre in West Jerusalem. The sign outside advertised many things in Hebrew, but had one line in English which announced 'Bacon and Eggs'. I was very surprised, to say the least, to find this on offer in the heart of Jerusalem, but it was lunch time and when it came time to order I felt inclined to experiment.

The gentleman sitting at the table next to me was working intensely on his computer. When I placed my order for bacon and eggs he looked up at me – in fact, stared at me. Then he looked around him for a while, and I had the distinct sense that he had become very uncomfortable. So uncomfortable, in fact, that he started to tidy up his papers, closed his computer, and left. It was as if this place of relaxation for him had suddenly become a place he should not be in.

In this city of so many different cultures, you can so quickly find yourself ill at ease, as if you have unwittingly crossed a boundary into a society you don't belong in.

But there are powerful struggles going on in Israel at the moment about how society should develop. For example, at one end, the ultra-orthodox seek more influence in broader society (segregation on public transport, demonstrations against Saturday opening of car parks, etc). At the other end, groups are campaigning to achieve full equality for all citizens of Israel, irrespective of religion, race, or gender (often citing the founding document of the State of Israel, the Declaration of Independence), and are particularly active on issues of gender exclusion.

Just this week, four Jewish women were detained at the Western Wall, and charged with disturbing the public peace, based on a regulation which outlaws performing a religious act which 'offends the feelings of others'. They have now been barred from the Western Wall for 50 days.

The Western Wall (Kotel) is, as you will know, a powerful and meaningful place for all Jewish people, whatever their background – orthodox, conservative, reformed, progressive. It is the closest point worshippers can freely come to the Holy of Holies. The area is divided off into two parts, one for men and one for women. In the male part, worshippers can pray, dance and sing, read the Torah, and express their faith in just about any way they wish. The women on the other, smaller side of the partition are expected to stand silently in their space, not pray out loud, and not act out rituals normally performed by men. They are also not allowed to read from the Torah when close to the wall.

Some of the women wear colourful 'feminine' prayer shawls. The group of four women who were excluded from the Kotel were wearing the black and white Tallit (prayer shawls) that are preferred by orthodox men, and this was seen as a direct challenge that could have led to conflict, perhaps even rioting, by the offended ultra-orthodox males.

There are other places where 'public order' rules are strictly enforced. A Jewish visitor to Haram al-Sharif (Temple Mount) would likely be accompanied by an Israeli soldier and a Muslim guard, and if there were any sign of prayer, or the opening of a prayer book, they would be quickly led off Temple Mount – because such prayer could cause a backlash of rage against them from the Muslim worshippers. And it could quickly escalate.

The Human Right to ‘freedom of religious expression’ here, has to be balanced against the need to maintain ‘public order’. On Haram al-Sharif, of course, there are broader Jewish-Muslim issues, and prayer could indeed be used as an act of provocation.

But for those who have a sincere desire to pray in thanksgiving to God, wherever they find themselves in the City, public order issues seem so often to ‘penalise the victim’. I am always aware at the great Christian festivals, with the intense security and the presence of troops and police, supposedly to defend the worshippers, that often it is the worshippers themselves who come off worst, as they are herded about and barred from moving freely.

However, at the Western Wall, the struggle seems to be about the ‘heart’ of Judaism.

One organisation, IRAC (Israel Religious Action Centre), which describes itself as the ‘public and legal advocacy arm of the reform movement’, and has the goal of ‘advancing pluralism in Israeli society and defending the freedoms of conscience, faith and religion’, has been active recently in a legal campaign. They have gone to Israel’s Supreme Court to demand a change in the make-up of the Western Wall Heritage Council, which is currently made up completely of Orthodox Jews. ‘We want the body to resemble the real diversity of the Jewish people in Israel and the Diaspora’.

As a guest in this country I do not want, wittingly or unwittingly, to offend another person’s religious sensibilities. I seek to understand the different cultures. I recently spent a fascinating day at the Israel Museum, visiting the exhibition about the Haredi Community (what we might call the ultra-orthodox community) and learnt a lot from it. But I would not want that community to dictate how I live in my space – I have my own cultural background and values. Nor would they want me to dictate to them how they should live.

But in public space it is a different matter. And that is where the struggle for the future of Israeli society is taking place. And this is not something that anyone can be impartial about. We all feel we have a right to be who we are in public space.

I felt sorry that I had unwittingly caused discomfort in that cafe – but if it is any consolation to anyone, the coffee was lovely, so were the eggs, but the bacon – never again. “It may be bacon, Jim, but not as we know it”.



# Church Flowers



## FLOWERS

## DISTRIBUTION

### SEPTEMBER

2<sup>nd</sup> Mrs J Flett  
 9<sup>th</sup> Mrs N Miller  
 16<sup>th</sup> Miss N Watson  
 23<sup>rd</sup> Church Flower Fund  
 30<sup>th</sup> Harvest Thanksgiving

Miss N Watson  
 Miss N Watson  
 Mrs A Stiff  
 Mrs A Stiff  
 Mrs J Macgregor

### OCTOBER

7<sup>th</sup> Mrs B Law  
 14<sup>th</sup> Mrs A Stiff  
 21<sup>st</sup> Miss M Weir  
 28<sup>th</sup> Mrs C Williams

Mrs J Macgregor  
 Mrs P Smith  
 Mrs P Smith  
 Mrs H Douglas

### NOVEMBER

4<sup>th</sup> Mrs D Cross  
 11<sup>th</sup> Remembrance Sunday  
 18<sup>th</sup> Mrs Jess Henderson  
 25<sup>th</sup> Mrs H Douglas

Mrs H Douglas  
 -----  
 Mrs D Cross  
 Mrs D Cross

### DECEMBER

2<sup>nd</sup> Miss M Robertson

Mrs S Kirk

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